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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO STUDY, MITIGATE AND MINIMIZE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE DISASTER AT CHERNOBYL

Letter dated 1 May 1991 from the Permanent Representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the statement by the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in connection with the fifth anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 12, 70, 78 and 88 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Guennadi I. OUDOVENKO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic

* A/46/50.

ANNEX

Statement by the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, dated 26 April 1991, in connection with the fifth anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster

Five years ago, unit 4 of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant exploded. In our Republic alone approximately 2 million people, 116 districts, entire large cities, enormous forested areas and tracts of land, rivers and the air were subjected to the deadly threat of radioactive contamination. The most distressing losses, however, were the hundreds and thousands of human lives which we have still not counted.

Today in the Ukraine, it is perhaps difficult to find anyone whose heart would not be dismayed by the radioactive ashes of Chernobyl and whose spirit would not be embittered by its enduring pain. This is essentially our national tragedy, all the consequences of which have still not been totally determined and understood.

Expressing today our profound sympathy to all those who suffered and incurred losses from the accident, we assure the voters, citizens and population of the Republic that the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR and the Government of the Ukraine fully realize the complexity of the Chernobyl situation, and did and are doing everything possible to reduce its lethal effects.

As is well known, the State programme of urgent measures to overcome the consequences of the accident is in its second year of operation. The implementation of the programme is being constantly monitored by the Supreme Soviet and the Counsel of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR. A moratorium has been imposed on the construction of new nuclear-power units in the Republic and a decision was taken to shut down gradually the Chernobyl plant. The Ukraine has been declared an ecological-disaster area.

Furthermore, an entire package of legislation has been adopted, designed to regulate the status of citizens who suffered as a result of the Chernobyl accident or are participating in the efforts to eliminate its effects, and also a legal regime has been instituted for the areas subjected to radioactive contamination. A residence plan for the population in areas with high levels of radioactive contamination has been drawn up and a Republic Centre for Radiation Medicine and Radiology is being established.

Doing everything in its power to protect the population from the effects of the accident, the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR and the Government of the Republic are at the same time endeavouring to ensure the unswerving fulfilment by the Government of the Soviet Union of the obligations undertaken to compensate for the damage caused by Chernobyl.

The Supreme Soviet is also counting on the support of the world community, including the Ukrainian diaspora, which understands our efforts and actions and is providing practical assistance.

We, for our part, clearly understand that there are many problems and difficulties in this incredibly complicated matter. They are due to various reasons, including the negative crisis-related phenomena which have been recently taking place in the social and economic life of the Republic and the country. In spite of all this, however, we shall be optimistic. Very little has been done in five years. Nevertheless, today the new Ukrainian Parliament and Government have determined what to do and how to proceed further.

With us is our faith that we shall survive this catastrophe as well since we are none the less in our own land. With us are all the kind and honest people in the country and beyond its borders, all those who are not indifferent to the future of the planet. With us, lastly, is the faith in our State - the sovereign Ukraine - which we are building, faith in the creative strength of the people, their diligence, wisdom and ability to resolve the most complex situations.

In grief, we lower our heads over the graves of those whom Chernobyl snatched from our ranks; we thank the thousands of people working to eliminate the effects of the accident and share the sorrow and yearning to return of the thousands of persons evacuated from their familiar surroundings. We also assume the guilt of the previous Parliament and the previous Government before those who are marking the fifth anniversary of Chernobyl on radioactive-contaminated land.

We bow down before you, the people, for your courage and endurance. Together we shall persevere and prevail!